

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A rubber compound comprising at least one solid optionally halogenated butyl elastomer and at least one nanoclay, wherein the nanoclay has been organically modified and wherein the optionally halogenated butyl elastomer is prepared from isobutylene and a C₄ to a C₆ conjugated diolefin and optionally a substituted vinyl aromatic monomer.
2. (Original) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the butyl is a halogenated butyl elastomer.
3. (Original) A compound according to Claim 2, wherein the halogenated butyl is a brominated butyl elastomer.
4. (Currently Amended) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the nanoclay is a montmorillonite ~~that optionally has been organically modified~~.
5. (Cancelled).
6. (Original) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the compound comprises in the range from 0.01 – 10 phr of nanoclay(s).
7. (Original) A compound according to Claim 1, wherein the compound further comprises a curing system.
8. (Original) A compound according to Claim 7, wherein the curing system comprises sulfur and/or a sulfur compound.
9. (Original) A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1, wherein the nanoclay is admixed with the optionally halogenated butyl elastomer and optionally further components.
10. (Original) A process according to Claim 9, wherein the compound is vulcanized subsequent to mixing.